

Suggested Remarks
US Government Representative
CIP Turn Over Ceremony
Datu Paglas Trading Center
Datu Paglas, Maguindanao Province
02 June 2006, 10:45 a.m.

Honorable Secretary Dureza,
Honorable Governor Ampatuan,
Honorable Mayor Paglas,
Brgy. Captain Dimapalo,
Colleagues from the United States Government
and the GEM Program,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a great pleasure and a privilege to be
here with you all today, as we formally turn
over another Community Infrastructure
Project, the Datu Paglas Trading Center.

This facility is one of 800 community-level
infrastructure projects that USAID, in
partnership with the Government of the
Philippines, is building by the end of 2007,

through its Growth with Equity in Mindanao, or GEM Program.

These types of facilities, as well as a number of larger infrastructure improvements that we will also support, are designed to improve the quality of life for residents of the beneficiary communities. They also complement other important efforts that the U.S. Government and our Philippine partners are carrying out throughout Mindanao in the areas of microfinance, improved governance, education, family planning, health and nutrition, environmental management, and renewable energy.

While this simple facility provides the residents of Barangay Poblacion with a clean

and organized common area to sell their produce, it also serves a larger purpose. It demonstrates that the partnership between a community and our two governments – mutually committed to peace and prosperity in Mindanao—can achieve true progress, and real results. Thanks to these partnerships, we see before us today a concrete expression of the benefits of peace.

We are truly pleased to be able to help those who are committed to peace and who have the vision to see a brighter tomorrow for this Barangay, for the Municipality of Datu Paglas, for the Province of Maguindanao, for Mindanao and for the Philippines.

Thank you.